



# Maine School IPM News

Maine Department of Agriculture, Food, & Rural Resources

August 2012

## Pests, Pesticides and Maine Schools—What You Need to Know

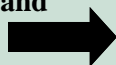
All Maine schools serving grades K-12 must adhere to the following:

- Adopt a school board-approved Integrated Pest Management policy.
- Designate a school employee as the IPM Coordinator to coordinate and approve pest management activities.
- Keep updated IPM and pesticide application records for two years.
- Notify parents and staff five days in advance of pesticide applications.
- Post approved notices two days before pesticide applications.

- Allow only people with a valid pesticide applicator's license to apply pesticides on school properties.

These directives apply to all buildings and grounds including sports fields, gardens and greenhouses, even organic ones!

**Here's a concise way to communicate about school IPM requirements to staff and families.**



**Mission:** To reduce the risk of pests and unnecessary pesticide use by promoting integrated pest management (IPM) in schools and providing support, resources and training.

## Is your school doing all it can to minimize health risks from pests and pesticides?

State pesticide regulations are enforced to safeguard the health and safety of students and staff at all Maine's K-12 schools. Read Maine's pesticide regulations at [www.thinkfirstspraylast.org/schoolipm](http://www.thinkfirstspraylast.org/schoolipm)

Anyone supplying pesticides on school-owned or

school-used properties must be licensed by the Maine Board of Pesticides Control.

### **Pesticides include:**

- Insect sprays, granules, and bombs
- Mouse/rat poisons
- Ant 'traps' with insecticidal bait
- Plant disease products

- Weed killers
- Any product applied to control insect, weed or rodent pests

### **Not pesticides:**

- Mouse and rat traps with no poison

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## Menacing Mice—What You Should Know

Mice are common problems in and around schools. Mice cause fires by gnawing on electrical wires, transmit pathogens, and are associated with allergens and asthma triggers and higher absenteeism due to asthma.

Maine has one of the highest childhood and adult asthma rates in the U.S. It is important that our schools are well operated and maintained to reduce health risks and support learning.

A recent study has shown that asthma allergens are highest in mouse-infested schools (Sheehan et al. 2009<sup>1</sup>).

### What to Look for



The presence of mice is usually indicated by sightings, damage from gnawing into food containers, or presence of droppings. These signs are most likely to be found along linear pathways including corners between walls and floors, along the base of foundations, along pipes or electrical conduits, etc.

An intensive search near droppings or other signs will often uncover the nest in wall voids, cardboard boxes, wooden or plastic pallets, heating units, vending machines, appliances or kitchen equipment.

Effective, low hazard options are available to eliminate mice.

### IPM Mouse Management

- Seal any openings greater than ¼" diameter in foundations, walls, roof, and screen vents.
- Remove or trim ground cover and other landscape plants to expose ground and discourage rodent travel ways and burrowing.
- Install or repair door sweeps to prevent access.
- Clean it up! Remove clutter inside classrooms, storage and other areas. Store items off the floor to reduce harborage and allow proper cleaning and inspection. Empty trash daily and keep the garbage cans clean.
- Clean up droppings and urine promptly using water, detergent and disinfectant.
- Place snap traps, and/or live traps in non-visible, inaccessible areas to trap rodents. Place traps in dark places, along foraging paths marked by rodent droppings.

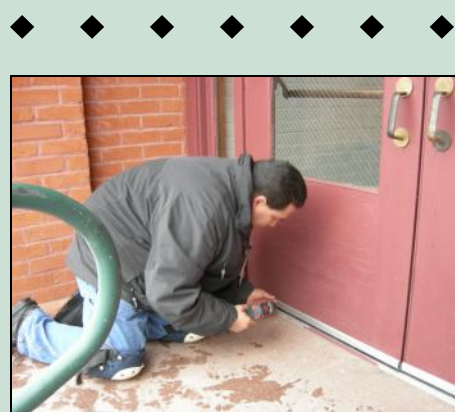
<sup>1</sup>Sheehan et. Al. 2009. Mouse allergens in urban elementary schools and homes of children with asthma.

### For more information:

- [Maine School IPM Rodent Fact Sheet](http://www.maine.gov/agriculture/pesticides/schoolipm/pests/rodents.htm)  
[www.maine.gov/agriculture/pesticides/schoolipm/pests/rodents.htm](http://www.maine.gov/agriculture/pesticides/schoolipm/pests/rodents.htm)

- [Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Management](http://icwdm.org/handbook/rodents/ro_b31.pdf)  
[http://icwdm.org/handbook/rodents/ro\\_b31.pdf](http://icwdm.org/handbook/rodents/ro_b31.pdf)

- [eXtension Action Plan for Rodents](http://www.extension.org/pages/63911/school-ipm-action-plan-for-rodents)  
[www.extension.org/pages/63911/school-ipm-action-plan-for-rodents](http://www.extension.org/pages/63911/school-ipm-action-plan-for-rodents)



**Pest-management specialist Elijah Reyes installs a door sweep at Denver's Dora Moore School.**



**Cracks at older schools can be filled with copper wool to discourage pests from entering.**  
(hole in Dora Moore School, CO)  
([www.ednewsparent.org](http://www.ednewsparent.org))

## Wasps—Yellowjackets and Other Hornets

Most stinging bees and wasps are beneficial and should be preserved unless they pose a direct hazard to humans. However, despite their many benefits, stinging insects may sometimes pose a hazard and it may become necessary to control them. Many individuals are highly sensitive to stinging insect venom. A severe reaction can lead to serious injury or death.

### IPM for Wasps

- If large numbers of wasps are appearing in areas frequented by children, search the school grounds for nests. Look for nests in the ground (often under rock piles or bushes), among the branches of trees or shrubs, under eaves, playground equipment, meter boxes and inside walls. Watch wasps to locate nest openings in the ground or in buildings. They will be most active on warm sunny days.
- Use good sanitation practices outside. Keep grounds trash free. Empty trash frequently, especially during warm months. This will eliminate the lure of food odors.
- Wash dumpsters on a regular basis to eliminate spilled foods and liquids.
- Seal off openings in structures, playground equipment, pipes, etc. to prevent wasps from constructing nests inside cavities accessed by those openings.

### For more information:

- [Maine School IPM Wasps, Hornets and Bees Fact Sheet](http://www.maine.gov/agriculture/pesticides/schoolipm/pests/wasps.htm)  
[www.maine.gov/agriculture/pesticides/schoolipm/pests/wasps.htm](http://www.maine.gov/agriculture/pesticides/schoolipm/pests/wasps.htm)
- [eXtension Action Plan for Yellowjackets](http://www.extension.org/pages/20998/school-ipm-action-plan-for-yellowjackets)  
[www.extension.org/pages/20998/school-ipm-action-plan-for-yellowjackets](http://www.extension.org/pages/20998/school-ipm-action-plan-for-yellowjackets)



**Eastern yellowjacket, *Vespula maculifrons***



**Yellowjacket ground nest**



**Paper wasp nest**

Photo Credits: Johnny N. Dell, Bugwood.org;; msmosquito.com; Buginfo.com

### WHY TEACH IPM?

Engage your students in learning about their natural world! IPM encourages environmentally friendly methods of managing pests.

### Visit our School IPM Curricula Page:

[www.gotpests.org](http://www.gotpests.org)

Click on the blue Teachers' Box.

Or [www.maine.gov/ipm](http://www.maine.gov/ipm)

Click on "Classroom Resources"





Maine Department of Agriculture,  
Food, and Rural Resources  
28 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

Phone: 207-287-7616

Fax: 207-624-5065 E-mail:

kathy.murray@maine.gov

[www.thinkfirstspraylast.org/schoolIPM](http://www.thinkfirstspraylast.org/schoolIPM)

**We're on the Web!**

**[www.thinkfirstspraylast.org/schoolIPM](http://www.thinkfirstspraylast.org/schoolIPM)**

## Best Management Practices for Athletic Fields and School Grounds

As directed by The Maine Legislature, the Board of Pesticides Control developed Best Management Practices (BMPs) for pesticide use with a goal of minimizing human exposure to pesticides. This document gives specific guidance to help schools keep maintenance costs down while improving the safety and appearance of athletic fields and school grounds.

**Find it at [http: www.maine.gov/agriculture/pesticides/schoolipm/pdf/School\\_Grounds\\_BMPs\\_2012.pdf](http://www.maine.gov/agriculture/pesticides/schoolipm/pdf/School_Grounds_BMPs_2012.pdf)**



## Upcoming Webinars

**Webinars are a great way to stay up to date and train your staff**

Outdoor and Turf Field School Integrated Pest Management, August 28, 2012: 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM EDT  
[www.gotomeeting.com/register/966262392](http://www.gotomeeting.com/register/966262392)

This webinar will show you how to incorporate a variety of IPM practices into the school's daily outdoor management routine.

"Bedbugs", August 28, 2012: 2:30pm - 4:00pm EDT  
[www1.gotomeeting.com/register/722105169](http://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/722105169)

**-OR-**

"Bedbugs", September 4, 2012: 1:30pm - 3:00pm EDT  
[www1.gotomeeting.com/register/616296392](http://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/616296392)

This presentation discusses why bed bugs are a challenge, how to develop a bed bug action plan, inspecting for bed bugs, managing bed bugs, bed bug prevention, and avoiding litigation due to bed bugs. Register today!

Pest Proofing and Exclusion – getting ready for winter, September 6, 2012: 11:00 AM EDT  
<https://connect.extension.iastate.edu/urbancop>

**No advance registration. Log in 15 minutes prior to event.**

This informative webinar will discuss how you can prevent pest problems from happening and how you and your staff can help by not only preventing pests, but also make your school buildings healthier.

Strategic Collaboration for Effective Asthma Management in Schools  
Wednesday, September 12, 2012: 2 – 3 pm EDT  
[www3.gotomeeting.com/register/606139070](http://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/606139070)

Want to know how controlling asthma in schools can lead to improved academic performance? Learn this and more as leading asthma experts discuss best practices for asthma management in schools.

**For other training opportunities:**

See [EPA's School IAQ website](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/) for more info about these and other webinars and resources

Or see [Maine School IPM Program](http://www.maine.gov/agriculture/pesticides/schoolipm/workshops/index.htm) for these and other training opportunities



[www.maine.gov/agriculture/pesticides/schoolipm/workshops/index.htm](http://www.maine.gov/agriculture/pesticides/schoolipm/workshops/index.htm)